

SYMPOSIUM ON COMMERCIAL SPACEFLIGHT SAFETY ISSUES (D6)
Commercial Space Flight Safety and Emerging Issues (1)

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DASSAULT AVIATION'S SUBORBITAL PROJECTS: ROOTS AND PROSPECTIVE

Abstract

Dassault Aviation began to study suborbital projects in 1998 with VEhra, a family of aircraft designed to launch satellites into low earth orbit. VEhra Medium is a 30-ton vehicle able to launch small satellites whereas VEhra Heavy is a 200-ton aircraft suitable for satellites up to seven tons or spaceship joining the International Space Station.

From 2002, a smaller manned version, named VSH, has been developed. It weighs seven tons and can carry six people. In spite of different missions, the two vehicles have common features such as shape, take-off piggybacked on a commercial plane and landing in a gliding way.

In cooperation, Dassault Aviation is now studying evolutions of vehicles that will be presented in this conference.